TOTAL SCORE (out of 100 points): ___90___

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APPLICANT INFORMATION

Name of Organization: Georgia Aquarium, Inc.
Applicant ID: EE4131030
Reviewer:

PURPOSE - This form is used to evaluate proposals based on criteria and associated points delineated in the EE Model and Sub-Award Grant Solicitation Notice for 2013. In addition, reviewers must provide comments on the strengths and weaknesses of the proposals for each criterion, and overall comments about the proposal at the end of the form. Clear, substantive and constructive comments document for the record scores given to proposals, and also help in the debriefing of applicants who request a follow-up conversation after receiving their scores.

PRIORITIES: For informational purposes, identify which priorities the proposal addresses.

Educational Priority: Grant applications must provide information about how the applicant will address at least one of the priorities listed below. Check the appropriate box (es) for the educational priority(s) named by the applicant (and/or those addressed by the applicant, as determined by the reviewer) (see Section I(C)).

Reviewer	Applicant	
☐	☐	**Community Projects:** Addressing environmental stewardship in a local formal or informal educational context using outdoor, place-based, experiential, service learning and /or community-focused stewardship activities as the primary teaching tool(s).
☐	☐	**Human Health and the Environment:** Educating students of any age group, from the very young through the elderly, and training their educators or community leaders on how to teach, in formal and non-formal settings, in the outdoors and in classrooms, about human health threats from environmental pollution and how to minimize human exposure to preserve good health.
☐	☐	**Career Development:** Educating students of any age group, from the very young through the elderly, and training their educators or community leaders on how to teach, in formal and non-formal settings, about environmental issues, solutions and stewardship for the purpose of encouraging interest in careers in environmental fields.
☐	☐	**EE Capacity Building:** Building the capacity of agencies and organizations to develop, deliver, and sustain comprehensive environmental education programs statewide. Capacity building applications may focus on one, state, multiple states or a region of the country.
☒	☒	**Educational Advancement:** Utilizing environmental education as a catalyst to advance state or local educational goals and to improve environmental literacy among students in formal education programs.
☒	☒	**EE Teaching Skills:** Providing pre-service and in-service professional development for teachers, faculty, or non-formal educators to improve their environmental education teaching skills and/or knowledge about environmental issues and content, such as sustainability, water and air quality, chemical risks, hazardous wastes, climate change and greenhouse gas emissions.

Environmental Priority: Grant applications must provide information about how the applicant will address at least one of the priorities listed below. Check the appropriate box(es) for the environmental priority(s) named by the applicant (and/or those addressed by the applicant, as determined by the reviewer) (see Section I(C)).

Reviewer	Applicant	
☐	☐	**Addressing Climate Change and Improving Air Quality**
☐	☐	**Taking Action on Toxics and Chemical Safety**
☐	☐	**Making a Visible Difference in Communities Across the Country**
☒	☒	**Protecting Water: A Precious, Limited Resource**
☐	☐	**Launching a New Era of State, Tribal and Local Partnerships**

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
2013 EE MODEL AND SUB-AWARD GRANTS PROGRAM

PROPOSAL EVALUATION CRITERIA - See Section V of the Solicitation Notice for a full explanation of the criteria and scoring.

(1) **Project Summary:** Under this factor, proposals will be evaluated based on the extent to which the project summary clearly and completely addresses the content and format described in Section IV(C)(3)(a). Summary should include:

- Description of applicant organization and partnerships.
- Summary of project that indicates that the current project has not been previously funded; how it is a **model, replicable program**; and includes project goals and objectives.
- Description of how project is to be implemented.
- Description of the target audience.
- Lists the expenses and costs associated with the project that EPA will finance.

5   pts 0-5

5   **Subtotal (0 to 5 points)**

Comments (Required):

Excellent description of this nonprofit organization that already reaches an estimated 2 million people per year as an aquarium. Good initial detail in project summary, with clear goals and objectives to provide a total of 13 educator-training workshops for 280 Georgia teachers, who will then be able to reach an estimated 29,400 K-12 students. Partners listed include several county school systems, universities, institutes and a marine sanctuary. "Gordon County Schools" is mentioned as a partner here, however in the partner letters there is a letter from Gordon State College so presumably this is what was meant.

(2) **Project Description:** Under this factor, proposals will be evaluated based on how well and the extent to which the applicant addresses the format and content described in Section IV(C)(3)(b):

10   pts 0-10   (i) <u>What</u>: Substantively, clearly and completely explains what the project will entail, including the educational and environmental priorities addressed, the goals the project hopes to achieve, how it will serve as a **replicable model** for advancing and strengthening the field of environmental education and how the project encourages behavior change associated with stewardship.

10   pts 0-10   (ii) <u>Why</u>: Substantively, clearly and completely explain the **need for the project as a model**, including why the particular goals, priorities and audience(s) have been chosen.

9   pts 0-10   (iii) <u>How</u>: Substantively, clearly and completely explain how the project will accomplish the stated goals and objectives, including how well the project will encourage behavioral change and increased environmental stewardship, how its methods or programs will **serve as a model capable of being replicated in a variety of settings**, and how it will advance and strengthen the field of environmental education.

8   pts 0-10   (iv) <u>Who</u>: Proposals will be evaluated based on how well the project:
  - Identifies the target audience, numbers reached, why they were chosen, and clearly explains the recruitment plan, including incentives to be used such as teacher stipends or continuing education credits and if/how the applicant's partner(s) will help with recruitment. (5 points)
  - Reaches a diverse audience, including but not limited to minority, low income and tribal communities, and demonstrates how the project will help address environmental issues that are more likely to adversely affect the audience (s) targeted. (5 points)

4   pts 0-5   (v) <u>Sub-Award/Sub-Grant Program</u>: Under this factor, applications will be evaluated on their approach for ensuring that **exactly** 25% of the grant funds awarded are distributed through sub-awards/sub-grants of $5000 or less to eligible sub-recipients. (5 points)

41   **Subtotal (0 to 45 points)**

Comments (Required):

Excellent description of this nonprofit organization that already reaches an estimated 2 million people per year as an aquarium. Good initial detail in project summary, with clear goals and objectives to provide educator-training workshops for 280 Georgia teachers, who will then be able to reach an estimated 29,400 K-12 students.

Good statement of need, quoting data from surveys of 589 Georgia teachers that stated they reported a significant lack of comfort in teaching different environmental subjects including climate change as well as water-related issues.

Each individual professional development workshop (of 13 total) is summarized with theme and content, number of teachers reached, length, grade levels and cost.

More clarity is needed in the description of the workshops. What is included in the cost estimate of each workshop – obviously longer workshops are more expensive, but where is the detailed breakout on these cost figures?

The applicant has proactively already chosen groups for their sub-award grant funding allocation, including sub-awards to a university, an ocean institute, schools, a college and a marine sanctuary. Some of these amounts are for the transportation costs to some of the workshops, see note at end regarding this.

Proposal would benefit from more detail on the number of economically disadvantaged students that may be reached – such as quoting school system statistics on free and reduced lunch recipients, etc.

(3) Project Evaluation: Under this factor, proposals will be evaluated based on the extent to which the applicant explains how the project's success will be tracked and measured and the quality of the evaluation plan (see Section IV(C)(3)(c)):

8	pts 0-10		Substantively, clearly, and completely explains how success in meeting project goals and objectives will be achieved, tracked and measured. The evaluation plan should include indications of how progress in achieving the proposed project outputs and outcomes will be tracked and measured, including how well the project supports EPA's Strategic Plan and the improvement of the environment over time.

8   Subtotal (0 to 10 points)

Comments (Required):

Applicant lists formative and summative evaluation methods that will be used to follow the program and identify improvement, as well as estimating professional growth related to science instruction. This section could include a little more explanation on how these evaluations will be conducted, with surveys, etc?

(4) Budget: Under this factor, proposals will be evaluated based on how well and to what extent (see Section IV(C)(4)):

3	pts 0-5	(i)	Does the budget information clearly and accurately show how all funds, both EPA and non-federal funds, will be used.
5	pts 0-5	(ii)	Is the funding request reasonable given the activities proposed and does the project provide a good return on the investment.

8   Subtotal (0 to 10 points)

Comments (Required):

Good inclusion of other partners who are picking up the majority of other costs involved with this grant proposal. The amount requested is reasonable given the potential number of students reached by this project.

Financially, this grant proposal was unclear, with amounts and totals in various places – this would benefit from greater clarity

Travel expenses, which make up the vast majority of the project funds requested - $67,960 out of the requested $90,133 (75 percent), are not given much detail – proposal would benefit from more information given as to how the travel amounts are calculated, as opposed to descriptions such as $21,000 for "transportation" and $18,700 for "Accommodation" and $4,000 for "Activities". Some of these are detailed elsewhere, finding it all in one place, in detail, is better.

Indirect charges estimate was stated to be approximately 25 percent of total (and they will be submitting this IDC agreement later) but at least the Aquarium is covering this portion of the proposal, this is not part of the requested federal funds.

(5) Timeline, Logic Model, and Partnership Letters of Commitment: Under this factor, proposals will be evaluated based on how clearly and completely and to what extent (see Section IV(C)(5)):

5	pts 0-5	(i)	**Timeline:** Does the timeline link the activities to a clear project schedule, and clearly indicate a realistic timeline of when each action, event, milestone, and evaluation will occur.
4	pts 0-5	(ii)	**Logic Model:** Does the applicant, through a Logic Model, clarify in a graphic display the outputs and outcomes developed through the project in accordance with the instructions and information in Appendix C.
5	pts 0-5	(iii)	**Partnership Letters of Commitment:** Do the letters of commitment from partners demonstrate how the applicant will engage with their partner(s) to **effectively develop and implement the project as a model that could be replicated**, and could advance and strengthen the field of EE.

No points should be awarded if no letters of commitment are included, or if letters only indicate endorsement or recommendation of the project. The number of points awarded should reflect the extent of the partnership(s) as described in the letters, and the ability of said partnership(s) to fulfill the project goals.

14   Subtotal (0 to 15 points)

Comments (Required):

Clear graph of timeline, and graph of outputs and outcomes as project performance measures, more detail could be included in the outcomes, including information covered earlier in the proposal on what teachers are expected to learn through this program. Partners are enthusiastic and have provided letters of commitment detailing their contribution to the grant proposal activities.

(6) Programmatic Capability and Past Performance: Under this factor, proposals will be evaluated based on how well and to what extent (see Sections IV(C)(5)(c) and V(A)(5)):

2	pts 0-3	(i)	Does the applicant provide evidence of past performance in successfully completing and managing the assistance agreements identified in the response to Section IV(C)(5)(c) of the announcement. *(If the applicant indicated that they have not received federal grants in the past, a neutral score of 1 point should be given. If no information is provided, a score of zero should be given.)*

2	pts 0-2	(ii)	Does the applicant demonstrate a history of meeting the reporting requirements under the assistance agreements identified in response to Section IV(C)(5)(c) of the announcement, including whether the applicant submitted acceptable final technical reports under those agreements, the extent to which the applicant adequately and timely reported on their progress toward achieving the expected outputs and outcomes under those agreements, and if such progress was not being made whether the applicant adequately reported why not. *(If the applicant indicated that they have not received federal grants in the past, a neutral score of 1 point should be given. If no information is provided, a score of zero should be given.)*
5	pts 0-5	(iii)	Does the applicant provide evidence of organizational experience and a plan for the timely and successful achievement of the objectives of the project.
5	pts 0-5	(iv)	Does the applicant provide evidence of staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources (and/or the ability to obtain them) to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project.

NOTE: EPA may consider relevant information from other sources, including agency files and prior/current grantors to verify and/or supplement the information supplied by the applicant.

14 **Subtotal (0 to 15 points)**

Comments (Required):

All individuals associated with administering the grant are experienced and highly qualified. Previous experience with federal grants is listed as the Improving Teacher Quality Grants Program (does not list as a federal agency grant but this appears to be through the Department of Education, a federal agency) and also a number of other agencies and private foundations. Applicant states that all projects were completed on time and complied with all requirements.

Worksheet:

Possible points	Score	
0-5	5	(1) **Project Summary**
0-45	41	(2) **Project Description**
0-10	8	(3) **Project Evaluation**
0-10	8	(4) **Budget**
0-15	14	(5) **Timeline, Logic Model, and Partnership Letters of Commitment**
0-15	14	(6) **Programmatic Capability and Past Performance**
	90	**TOTAL SCORE (out of 100 points)**

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
2013 EE MODEL AND SUB-AWARD GRANTS PROGRAM

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Name of Organization: Georgia Aquarium, Inc.
Applicant ID: EE4131030
Reviewer:

Overall <u>strengths</u> of the proposal (Required):

Some of the strengths include: pre-existing audience; superbly qualified organization, leadership and staff; excellent partners; simple and effective plan; good numbers reached for the amount of federal funds requested.

Good provision of both teacher incentives and professional learning units for participants.

Excellent dedicated focus on educating teachers about watersheds and oceans, to fulfill the environmental priority: Protecting Water.

This appears to include some pre-existing professional development workshops that are being expanded as well as added to, in order to include more teachers from across the state of Georgia. As such, the program has a solid network of pre-established partnerships with other qualified organizations. Good use of experiential learning to establish long term changes in teachers; ability to confidently and effectively teach the material to their students.

Partners include the University of West Georgia, the Skidaway Institute of Oceanography, Gordon State College, Lamar County Schools, Fulton County Schools, NOAA Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary.

Overall a very good grant proposal, reaching a large target audience of students with simple effective delivery of professional development workshops on the water theme.

Overall <u>weaknesses</u> of the proposal (Required):

One unknown is how much time will be allocated to teaching the new material to the students. This proposal would be much stronger with a commitment from the schools as to how much time they will give to their teachers for teaching the new Coastal Connections information to their students. If the teachers learn all this information, then they also need a dedicated amount of time to teach it to the students, so that all 29,400 students will truly benefit.

The applicant has proactively already chosen groups for their sub-award grant funding allocation, including sub-awards to a university, an ocean institute, schools, a college and a marine sanctuary. Some of these amounts are for the transportation costs to some of the workshops, and it is unclear if this accurately fits the scope of the sub-award concept.

Sub-award grants are designated in the RFP to be used to address at least one educational and one environmental priority of EPA and must be fundamentally educational (not just outreach or information only). Travel expense allocation, even if it is travel to a workshop where these things will occur – may or may not meet the definition of an allowable sub-award activity, however this is up to EPA for final decision. It is noted here as possibly needing clarification.

Other than these notes/concerns and anything mentioned in other comments in each section, the Georgia Aquarium grant proposal is solid and worthy of further consideration for possible funding.

TOTAL SCORE (out of 100 points): 0

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Name of Organization: Georgia Aquarium   Name Removed
Applicant ID: EE41 31030
Reviewer: ~~[REDACTED]~~

Information Redacted pursuant to 5 U.S.C.
Section 552 (b)(6), Personal Privacy

PURPOSE - This form is used to evaluate proposals based on criteria and associated points delineated in the EE Model and Sub-Award Grant Solicitation Notice for 2013. In addition, reviewers must provide comments on the strengths and weaknesses of the proposals for each criterion, and overall comments about the proposal at the end of the form. Clear, substantive and constructive comments document for the record scores given to proposals, and also help in the debriefing of applicants who request a follow-up conversation after receiving their scores.

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Reviewer Applicant

☐ ☐ **Community Projects:** Addressing environmental stewardship in a local formal or informal educational context using outdoor, place-based, experiential, service learning and /or community-focused stewardship activities as the primary teaching tool(s).

☐ ☐ **Human Health and the Environment:** Educating students of any age group, from the very young through the elderly, and training their educators or community leaders on how to teach, in formal and non-formal settings, in the outdoors and in classrooms, about human health threats from environmental pollution and how to minimize human exposure to preserve good health.

☒ ☐ **Career Development:** Educating students of any age group, from the very young through the elderly, and training their educators or community leaders on how to teach, in formal and non-formal settings, about environmental issues, solutions and stewardship for the purpose of encouraging interest in careers in environmental fields.

☐ ☐ **EE Capacity Building:** Building the capacity of agencies and organizations to develop, deliver, and sustain comprehensive environmental education programs statewide. Capacity building applications may focus on one, state, multiple states or a region of the country.

☒ ☒ **Educational Advancement:** Utilizing environmental education as a catalyst to advance state or local educational goals and to improve environmental literacy among students in formal education programs.

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Reviewer Applicant

☐ ☐ **Addressing Climate Change and Improving Air Quality**

☐ ☐ **Taking Action on Toxics and Chemical Safety**

☐ ☐ **Making a Visible Difference in Communities Across the Country**

☒ ☒ **Protecting Water: A Precious, Limited Resource**

☐ ☐ **Launching a New Era of State, Tribal and Local Partnerships**

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
2013 EE MODEL AND SUB-AWARD GRANTS PROGRAM

<u>**PROPOSAL EVALUATION CRITERIA**</u> - See Section V of the Solicitation Notice for a full explanation of the criteria and scoring.

(1) <u>**Project Summary:**</u> Under this factor, proposals will be evaluated based on the extent to which the project summary clearly and completely addresses the content and format described in Section IV(C)(3)(a). Summary should include:

- Description of applicant organization and partnerships.
- Summary of project that indicates that the current project has not been previously funded; how it is a **model, replicable program**; and includes project goals and objectives.
- Description of how project is to be implemented.
- Description of the target audience.
- Lists the expenses and costs associated with the project that EPA will finance.

    0   pts 0-5

    0   **Subtotal (0 to 5 points)**

Comments (Required):

Good project summary

(2) <u>**Project Description:**</u> Under this factor, proposals will be evaluated based on how well and the extent to which the applicant addresses the format and content described in Section IV(C)(3)(b):

    0   pts 0-10   (i) <u>What</u>: Substantively, clearly and completely explains what the project will entail, including the educational and environmental priorities addressed, the goals the project hopes to achieve, how it will serve as a **replicable model** for advancing and strengthening the field of environmental education and how the project encourages behavior change associated with stewardship.

    0   pts 0-10   (ii) <u>Why</u>: Substantively, clearly and completely explain the **need for the project as a model**, including why the particular goals, priorities and audience(s) have been chosen.

    0   pts 0-10   (iii) <u>How</u>: Substantively, clearly and completely explain how the project will accomplish the stated goals and objectives, including how well the project will encourage behavioral change and increased environmental stewardship, how its methods or programs will **serve as a model capable of being replicated in a variety of settings**, and how it will advance and strengthen the field of environmental education.

    0   pts 0-10   (iv) <u>Who</u>: Proposals will be evaluated based on how well the project:
- Identifies the target audience, numbers reached, why they were chosen, and clearly explains the recruitment plan, including incentives to be used such as teacher stipends or continuing education credits and if/how the applicant's partner(s) will help with recruitment. (5 points)
- Reaches a diverse audience, including but not limited to minority, low income and tribal communities, and demonstrates how the project will help address environmental issues that are more likely to adversely affect the audience (s) targeted. (5 points)

    0   pts 0-5   (v) <u>Sub-Award/Sub-Grant Program</u>: Under this factor, applications will be evaluated on their approach for ensuring that <u>**exactly**</u> 25% of the grant funds awarded are distributed through sub-awards/sub-grants of $5000 or less to eligible sub-recipients. (5 points)

    0   **Subtotal (0 to 45 points)**

Comments (Required):

greater detail is needed to be able to replicate the model

(3) Project Evaluation: Under this factor, proposals will be evaluated based on the extent to which the applicant explains how the project's success will be tracked and measured and the quality of the evaluation plan (see Section IV(C)(3)(c)):

pts 0-10   Substantively, clearly, and completely explains how success in meeting project goals and objectives will be achieved, tracked and measured. The evaluation plan should include indications of how progress in achieving the proposed project outputs and outcomes will be tracked and measured, including how well the project supports EPA's Strategic Plan and the improvement of the environment over time.

0   **Subtotal (0 to 10 points)**

Comments (Required):

Lacking details, metrics

(4) Budget: Under this factor, proposals will be evaluated based on how well and to what extent (see Section IV(C)(4)):

0   pts 0-5   (i) Does the budget information clearly and accurately show how all funds, both EPA and non-federal funds, will be used.

0   pts 0-5   (ii) Is the funding request reasonable given the activities proposed and does the project provide a good return on the investment.

0   **Subtotal (0 to 10 points)**

Comments (Required):

Budget is on target

(5) Timeline, Logic Model, and Partnership Letters of Commitment: Under this factor, proposals will be evaluated based on how clearly and completely and to what extent (see Section IV(C)(5)):

0   pts 0-5   (i) Timeline: Does the timeline link the activities to a clear project schedule, and clearly indicate a realistic timeline of when each action, event, milestone, and evaluation will occur.

0   pts 0-5   (ii) Logic Model: Does the applicant, through a Logic Model, clarify in a graphic display the outputs and outcomes developed through the project in accordance with the instructions and information in Appendix C.

0   pts 0-5   (iii) Partnership Letters of Commitment: Do the letters of commitment from partners demonstrate how the applicant will engage with their partner(s) to **effectively develop and implement the project as a model that could be replicated**, and could advance and strengthen the field of EE.

No points should be awarded if no letters of commitment are included, or if letters only indicate endorsement or recommendation of the project. The number of points awarded should reflect the extent of the partnership(s) as described in the letters, and the ability of said partnership(s) to fulfill the project goals.

0   **Subtotal (0 to 15 points)**

Comments (Required):

well organized

(6) **Programmatic Capability and Past Performance:** Under this factor, proposals will be evaluated based on how well and to what extent (see Sections IV(C)(5)(c) and V(A)(5)):

0   pts 0-3   **(i)** Does the applicant provide evidence of past performance in successfully completing and managing the assistance agreements identified in the response to Section IV(C)(5)(c) of the announcement. *(If the applicant indicated that they have not received federal grants in the past, a neutral score of 1 point should be given. If no information is provided, a score of zero should be given.)*

2

0   pts 0-2   **(ii)** Does the applicant demonstrate a history of meeting the reporting requirements under the assistance agreements identified in response to Section IV(C)(5)(c) of the announcement, including whether the applicant submitted acceptable final technical reports under those agreements, the extent to which the applicant adequately and timely reported on their progress toward achieving the expected outputs and outcomes under those agreements, and if such progress was not being made whether the applicant adequately reported why not. *(If the applicant indicated that they have not received federal grants in the past, a neutral score of 1 point should be given. If no information is provided, a score of zero should be given.)*

1

0   pts 0-5   **(iii)** Does the applicant provide evidence of organizational experience and a plan for the timely and successful achievement of the objectives of the project.

5

0   pts 0-5   **(iv)** Does the applicant provide evidence of staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources (and/or the ability to obtain them) to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project.

5

NOTE: EPA may consider relevant information from other sources, including agency files and prior/current grantors to verify and/or supplement the information supplied by the applicant.

(13)

0   **Subtotal (0 to 15 points)**

Comments (Required):

Strong staff, but lacking federal grant mgmt

Worksheet:

Possible points	Score	
0-5	0	**(1) Project Summary**
0-45	0	**(2) Project Description**
0-10	0	**(3) Project Evaluation**
0-10	0	**(4) Budget**
0-15	0	**(5) Timeline, Logic Model, and Partnership Letters of Commitment**
0-15	0	**(6) Programmatic Capability and Past Performance**
	0	**TOTAL SCORE (out of 100 points)**

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Name of Organization:

Applicant ID:

Reviewer:

Overall strengths of the proposal (Required):

A good project – needs more development and to be polished up.

Overall weaknesses of the proposal (Required):

Needs better metrics
Lacks federal grant mgmt experience